



FRIENDS OF NORTHCLIFFE

NEWSLETTER
March 2016



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As you will read in Steve's introduction we are still looking for people to organise events and promotions. Events are a regular feature on the calendar and as such regular contacts have already been made. Please do contact Steve if you feel you might be able to help.

Last January we started to introduce The Green Dog Walkers Scheme. This was, unsurprisingly, mainly taken up by people who do pick up after their dogs and dogs belonging to others! One weekend during the year I went on a pickup in all areas of the park and picked up many pounds of dog poo! The most distressing part, apart from stepping in dog poo, was finding so much of it near to litter bins where there was no excuse for leaving this hazard lying around. I was shocked to learn from those who look after our park that the main entrance is considered to be the most fouled area. I have only encountered a few people not willing to pick up after their four legged friend and one said it was due to a lack of bins. Despite bins at each main entrance to the park we unfortunately still have those who are not willing to carry dog poo until they reach a bin and leave their poo bags, if they use them, hanging from tree branches or on footpaths for others to dispose of. If you want to join the Green Dog Walkers Scheme please get in touch with me – you don't have to be a dog owner.

Liz Hansen

WELCOME



It seems almost yesterday that we ushered in the New Year, but as I write this, the end of the first quarter is almost upon us. It made me think about how fast everything seems to be these days – people never seem to have been busier. It also made me think about how having Northcliffe just over the road is such a blessing. It's a place where you can go in order for the pace to slow right down, for time to appear to pass more slowly, and to draw breath in an increasingly hectic world.

It's been another mild winter, although we have built a couple of snowmen and been out on the sledge, but you have to be quick. My wife and daughter spent a lovely morning up at Northcliffe in the snow last week. They managed to roll a snowball so big that they couldn't push it anymore. That's the kind of snow legacy I like to see – enduring piles of snow where people have had fun. When they're in our back garden, those sorts of piles generally have a hat and a scarf!

In January, we held our Annual General Meeting. Hugh Firman, our outgoing Deputy Chair, decided to step down from the committee, although he has said he will still be involved in activities as an active member.

True to his word, Hugh made the first event of 2016 happen, the Northcliffe Big Garden Birdwatch, in conjunction with the Bradford and Airedale Local Group of the RSPB.

Unfortunately, due to unexpected circumstances Hugh was unable to be there on the day, but the fact that the event happened at all is down to his continuing concern for Northcliffe. Hugh has been a fixture on the FoN committee for much of its existence, and has done an incredible amount for the benefit of Northcliffe. I would like to thank him on behalf of all of us for everything he has done, and will continue to do.





THE PLEASURES AND TRIALS OF DRY STONE WALLING AT NORTHCLIFFE



By John Bromley

Our elections at the AGM saw the following committee members appointed for 2016:

Steve Bruzzese (Chair), Sheila Parkin (Secretary), Joan Newman (Treasurer and Membership), Julia Pearson (Conservation), Keith Scott (Website), Liz Hansen (Newsletter), Val Harris (Northcliffe Heritage Project), John Bromley (General Committee Member), Guy Barford (General Committee Member), Joan Stevens (General Committee Member).

We are still without any promotions or events presence on the committee, although Melanie continues to lead the organisation for our major events – Easter, Rae Gala and Santa Special. It would be good to get some fresh blood in to help, even if you're not keen on leading, or being on the committee. Please do give me a call or drop me a line if you can help in any way. You can find my contact details in the committee information section of this newsletter.

As usual, there seems to be a lot happening in Northcliffe. Our friends up at Northcliffe Environmental Enterprises Team (NEET) are making great progress with their new toilet block. Bradford Model Engineering Society (BMES) are looking to increase their storage.

The Allotment Society continue to make progress in clearing the area by the clubhouse to return plots to use. The Heritage Project has more plans for excavations and explorations. And there's our usual calendar of events and conservation activities.

Looking forward, we've changed the weekend for the Rae Gala this year, back to its original slot of the first weekend in July. After last year's successful collaboration with the Shipley Street Arts Festival, we were keen to repeat it this year if it were possible. After talking to Q20 Events, who run the Festival, we discovered that they planned to move the date back a week, so we followed suit, and moved the Gala to Sunday 3rd July. It means that, like last year, we will be able to enjoy some of the wonderful street theatre from the Festival up in Northcliffe. I can't wait!

I'll close by wishing you all the very best for the coming year, and hope that you can get out and about in Northcliffe to enjoy that feeling of time standing still.

All the best,
Steve

In June 2014 Martin Love and I started work on the first dry stone wall repair. We created two wall ends (a kind of 'gateway') where a footpath had cut through the damaged wall between Old Spring Wood and the meadow. We worked on and off over several months in a variety of different weather conditions. Many people walked past and complimented us on the work in progress and the end result. Since then repair work has continued on other damaged wall sections, including at the nearby allotments, as time and weather has allowed.

The 'pleasures' of walling at Northcliffe have been the peace, the healthy environment and the proximity to wildlife. I have had a family of wrens 'sounding off' close behind me as I worked and robins practically around my feet looking for food from the disturbed soil and stones. I was pleased recently when a young fox strolled past seemingly unaware of my presence. Also the birds coming back to roost at dusk seemed somewhat disturbed by a human being still 'fiddling about' in their domain.

The 'trials' are mainly to do with the hard work of getting started on a new section which involves digging out the jumble of stone from the covering of old leaves and soil. Then there is the challenge of establishing a good line, sometimes working close to or around tree trunks. The irregular shape of a lot of the stone is vexing too – I assume that much of this walling stone was 'waste', that was left after the better stone was taken for building. Another trial was working through all seasons; this winter in particular, the wet and the mud can be very testing.

Ultimately, there is considerable satisfaction putting on the final coping stone to a newly repaired section of wall. The challenges of having achieved good lines and levels, wrestling with 'misshapen' pieces of stone and avoiding running joints fade away as you look back at it. There are certain sections of damaged wall in Northcliffe that we thought would never be repaired because too much stone was missing but based on our experience there probably is sufficient stone, but hidden from view in soil or leaves. It is good that there is plenty of scope for this repair work to continue into the future.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Please always check the notice boards, our website and your emails in case an event has been cancelled.

Easter Bunny Saturday 26 March 12.30 pm – 3 pm

Bring a picnic meet the Easter Bunny in the top field past the miniature railway. The Easter Bunny will again be strolling around meeting the children and riding the railway – you might even be lucky enough to be on the same train! The railway will be open all afternoon.

Make an Easter bonnet, or come along in one you made earlier, and take part in the Easter Bonnet competition. Other attractions eg our great value sweet tombola and others still to be confirmed.

Big Lunch Sunday 12 June 12 pm – 2 pm

Bring a picnic and join in the nationwide event that's about eating food with neighbours as a community. Join us in the field next to the miniature railway to enjoy your picnic and as Bradford Model Engineering Society will be open all afternoon why not treat the family to a ride on the miniature trains.

Rae Gala Sunday 3 July

Come and join us for our annual celebration of the gift of Northcliffe to the people of Shipley. This is always a lively and enjoyable day with lots of activities to take part in. More details nearer the time.

September (date to be announced) Garden Party

Watch out for more details of this exciting new venture. Date will be announced on the internet and notice boards.

Other Events Conservation, Heritage Project, etc Watch out for details of these on the internet, emails and notice board.

For the Easter Bunny event: if you have any unwanted jam jars please can you wash them, remove lids and labels, double bag and knot the top of the bags and deliver to 37 Springswood Place, Shipley. Just leave them in the garden. Donations of Easter cakes/ biscuits brought on the day would be appreciated.

CONSERVATION NEWS

By Julia Pearson



The winter events carried out have been very successful and we were pleased to complete the clearing of a large area of beech saplings that has been worked on for many years which means we are now ready to move on to another area.

Work on paths has included complementing the access improvements made in the summer at the top of Lynton Drive, we have planted a few trees and shrubs to create an attractive and wildlife friendly entrance to the woods. We also installed a few steps on one of the steep paths in Old Spring Wood. We have received positive feedback and would welcome any thoughts about other path improvements.

IT'S IN THE BAG!



Why not treat yourself to a new Eco cotton shopping bag or buy one or two for gifts. These good quality bags will be on sale for £3 each or two for £5.

Bags will be available for purchase at events and at other times please contact Liz and Peter Hansen on 01274 594690 or Liz and Geoff Morrison on 01274 580794.

£3 each or two for £5.



HERITAGE PROJECT ANNUAL OPEN TALK – JANUARY 2016



By Val Harris
Photograph by kind permission of the Telegraph and Argus

Over 75 people turned up on a Saturday afternoon to hear Derek Barker and Tony Woods talk about the heritages projects work under the title Northcliffe – a unique landscape.



Steve Bruzzese welcomed people to the event and Jane Robinson chaired the meeting which started with a short video showing a rotating 3-D LIDAR model of the western end of Northcliffe. This illustrated some surface features more clearly than hitherto seen.

Tony Woods outlined the development of the Heritage Project over the last two years and summarised plans for the future.

Derek described the ways in which archaeological study could augment historical researches. Geology maps explained what mineral resources were potentially available in Northcliffe, and a walk-over survey of the whole area identified the places at which such resources were exploited. Remote sensing techniques such as aerial photography, geophysics, and LiDAR scanning with laser light offered ways in which the whole, or part, of the landscape could be studied in great detail. LiDAR data was available for virtually the whole Northcliffe area and was especially useful since it was unaffected by the presence of trees. In 2016 small-scale excavations would be conducted at a quarry and a coal mine site prior to the completion of a detailed report on all Northcliffe Heritage Project activities.

Tony described coalmining and fireclay extraction in Northcliffe in the second half of the 19th century, about which we knew a considerable amount before the project started. Research since then has shown evidence of coal mining in the areas around Northcliffe dating back to the early 17th century.

He then talked about four sites within Northcliffe dating from the late 18th and early 19th century. 'Coal Pit Close' at the western end of Northcliffe Park appears to be the site of the 'mine in the Inclosure' for which there are financial accounts for the last 24 years of the 18th century. The accounts suggest that the mine had underground galleries and we have yet to reconcile this with the results of the geophysics survey. In 1800 at the other end of the park between the bowling green and the Branch, Joshua Field leased coal seams to a partnership which, briefly at least, included men involved in the Bowling Ironworks. Twenty years later John Wilmer Field leased coal under land on the current golf course just south of the woods. Tony has been able to match this lease to an undated plan of a coal mine. By overlaying maps and plans, it is clear that access to the mine was from a shaft in the woods.

A fourth area of mining, 'the golf course boundary pits' at the south-western end of the woods poses further questions. Many of these pits were actually in Heaton not Shipley and confusingly this part of the woodland was called Dungeon Wood on the Heaton Tithe map. While there was much mining around Heaton Royds and Heaton Shay in the late 18th century, we are yet to discover when these pits in the woods were opened and who operated them. There is a lot more to do!

Many thanks are due to all the FoN volunteers who helped make the meeting such a success.





On Sunday December 13th 2015, Northcliffe Woods were again transformed into a magical wonderland for one day only.

We ran our second Santa Special with our good friends at BMES, and what a fantastic event it was! Well over 100 children and their families rode the miniature railway to Santa's Grotto, and were delighted with their experience, as you can see from the photos.

The preparations began well before the event itself. Some of the work had been done last year, but we needed to find ways of making a very hard day a little easier to manage. Santa's sleigh was already in the bag, having been turned out from the BMES workshop last year by Ken. Decorating the grotto on the day took a huge amount of time, so we decided that it would be easier to already have our own 'grotto' structure, and make the decorations in advance. So, we invested in two dome-shaped event shelters, which connect to each other to form the exterior of the grotto.

We had a dry run one Saturday morning in November, with a crew of willing volunteers. We set up the event shelters, learning how best to put them together quickly, and then took measurements to design our interior. Melanie's mum played a blinder on the sewing machine, hemming yard after yard of fabric to create drapes to give the grotto its magical feel.

We also changed the timings a little, starting earlier in order to avoid having to take things down by the light of car headlamps! Whilst we still ended up finishing in the dark, we had at least got most things packed away by then. We also planned for Santa and his elves to have a little break in the middle of the event – even Santa needs a sandwich and the toilet from time to time!

On the day itself, Santa set out from the BMES station house, ringing his bell and greeting passers-by as he made his way to the grotto in his sleigh. The day passed fairly smoothly, thanks in no small part to the exceptional preparation put in before the event by Melanie, Ken and Rebekah. It was very busy, but without the sense of panic and impending doom that we had during the first year's event! Even though it all went well on the day, I think we learnt a lot from last year, and made sure that all our lessons were incorporated into this year's preparations.

And what a lovely atmosphere we created. The lovely smell of traditional mulled cider wafting on the air as you approached, brought to the event by Grumpy John's Cider, a (very) local producer. Then onto the station house, after being able to park your pram or buggy in the shelter we provided, where you were greeted with cups of tea and mince pies. As Christmas music played gently in the background, our efficient stationmaster Richard and his team despatched train after train of excited children off on their adventure to see Santa. The trains took them through the beautiful woodland track, adorned for today with Christmas decorations and figures, and dropped them off at the grotto. Santa's elves greeted each train, and kept things moving so that everyone got to see Santa without too long a wait. The grotto looked amazing, and delighted children emerged clutching presents, before boarding the train back to the station house.

Once again, Morrisons helped out with the event, donating mince pies and discounting the gifts for us. We're so grateful for their continuing help. They were amazing, particularly Paul Kelly, the store manager at Idle Enterprise 5, who together with his team helped make a lot of children very happy. It's particularly nice that a local business like Morrisons get to play a part in creating such a special community event. We also need to thank John Lambert and Q20 Theatre, home of Q20 Events, who lent us their amazing props for the grotto – a reindeer, Santa's throne, a sleigh, and even a (geographically inaccurate) penguin!

So many people helped create this lovely event – all the folk who helped wrap presents on a Thursday evening in Shipley bowling club, the volunteers who helped set up for the day (and beforehand), the BMES crew who worked so hard on the day, and the FoN members and committee who played a part. Too many to mention individually, but all essential in making this happen. Many thanks also to the companies that supported us – Morrisons, Q20 Events and Grumpy John's Cider. And special mentions to Melanie, Rebekah and Ken who worked so tirelessly in the run-up, and of course to our Santa, John, without whom there would have been a lot of disappointed children.

See you again next year!

By Mel and Steve Bruzzese
Photograph by John Shelton



MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE YEAR TO MARCH 2017

Thank you for all the support we have had in the last year.

We have 193 memberships currently and we are aiming for 200 members this year! 80 members are happy to receive the newsletters by email only, but please advise us if you would like to receive a hard copy again – the newsletter is an attractive publication and could be passed on to encourage prospective members.

Welcome to new members:

Anne and Peter Attfield, Nicola Ayres, Christine and Matthew Cooper, with children Ben, Amy and Lara, Jane Darnley, Ruth Eglin-Pugh, Cathy Fowler, Mr and Mrs Graham Hall, Jane Loe, Kate Moore and Dipak Mistry, Eddie Nash, Veronica Snowden

The following members have moved away from the area: Carol Wolk and Barbara Raine

Subscriptions have been increased by just £1 per category, the first increase for many years.

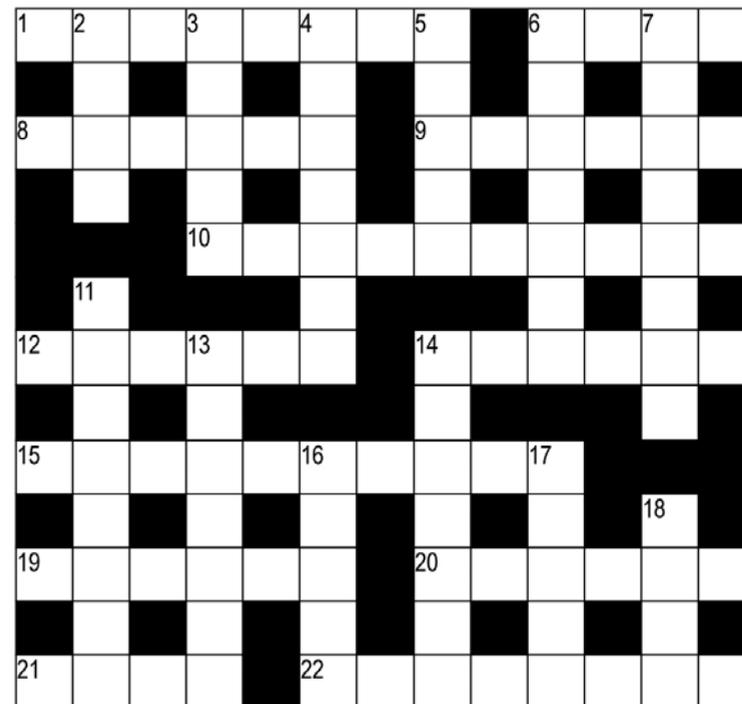
£7	Family
£6	Family concession
£5	Single
£4	Single concession

A membership form is enclosed with this newsletter.

Donations are always welcome, and we will use them across all of our areas of work unless you have a specific request.

Joan Newman

NORTHCLIFFE CROSSWORD No. 12



Across

- The largest UK tit according to RSPB (5,3)
- Litter found on the ground in the woods (4)
- Cat-like noises (6)
- Fruits of oaks, OR SCAN (anag) (6)
- January (5,5)
- BE BALD (anag) some ducks do this (6)
- NET AFT (anag) hibernators do this before winter (6)
- AS A NEW KING (anag) New... as spring approaches (10)
- Slide a fastening open (6)
- Sloping font (6)
- Tiny piece of land surrounded by water (4)
- KEEP A RAT (anag) Noisy green and red birds in our woods (8)

Down

- Precipitation (4)
- Noise from a large dog (1,4)
- ROSE VET (anag) to look after (2,5)
- STOAT (anag) bread (5)
- Warning, beware (4,3) or a place to spy from (7)
- RAKE TINT (anag) produces garments (1,7)
- Crested colourful winter visitors (8)
- No cake! What shall we do? (4,3)
- CAN FIRE (anag) a keeper of racing pigeons (7)
- POINT (anag) exact payment (2,3)
- PARKS (anag) needed for fire (5)
- It flies, no wings, just strings (4)

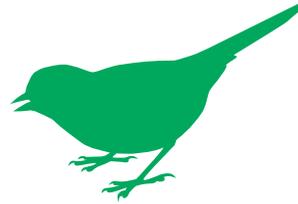
The answers can be found on the back page of this newsletter.

Composed by Joan Newman, assisted by Douglas Lumb



WOODY'S SPOT for younger friends

By Jeannie Kopasz



All living things need water. But it sometimes happens that we can have too much of even the things that we need. Sugar and salt, for example, makes our food taste good but too much of either is bad for us. Too much of anything can cause as many problems as having too little.

If you saw photos of the Christmas floods you might think we've had more than enough rain this winter. And anyone who has walked a dog every day at Northcliffe would certainly agree! The field and woods at Northcliffe didn't flood but the ground became waterlogged. To understand this, imagine squeezing a dry sponge in water. Bubbles appear as the tiny pockets of air fill with water. To begin with, the dry sponge weighs very little and floats on top of the water. When the air is squeezed out as bubbles the little pockets fill up with water and the sponge becomes heavier and no longer floats on the surface of the water. At this stage the sponge cannot take up any more water because it is saturated.



"I'm saturated!"

Most wildlife can cope with high rainfall but when the ground is flooded or remains waterlogged for weeks at a time all soil dwellers are at risk.

And there are a lot of soil dwellers – maybe 100 million small creatures living in one acre of soil! They could include millipedes, centipedes, woodlice, beetles, ants, worms, slugs and snails, to mention but a few.

"An acre is almost the same size as a football pitch."



If these 'creepy crawlies' come to the surface of the soil to escape their flooded burrows they find themselves in a no-win situation because then they are more likely to be eaten by birds, slugs, badgers or hedgehogs.

Long periods of heavy rain are also bad news for some of our birds. Barn owls, for example, have special soft feathers which help them to fly almost silently. In very wet weather these feathers become so waterlogged that the owls are unable to fly to hunt the mice and voles which they need to survive. The owls and their chicks then die of starvation.

Even fish eating birds such as herons and kingfishers can go hungry when fast flowing rivers become cloudy with sediment.

Ground nesting birds such as Lapwing lay eggs in a scraped hollow in the ground. In a very wet spring their newly hatched chicks may well drown or die of cold.

The recent floods, here and in Cumbria, caused many people the distress of losing their homes. Birds and animals may suffer the same loss when trees are uprooted and nests, nest holes and burrows are destroyed. Trees rely on their roots to hold them steady but waterlogged ground allows the roots to move. Young trees, or those with shallow root systems, are then likely to topple.

So what will the weather bring next?

Here are some old weather sayings – why not check them out for yourself to decide if they might be true.

'Ash before oak, we'll have a soak (heavy rain),
Oak before ash, we'll have a splash (light rain).'

To check this out you need to see which tree comes into leaf first – the ash or the oak.

'Rain before 7, fine by 11.'

If it is raining before 7 in the morning it should be fine by lunchtime.

'If Candlemas Day be fair and bright
Winter will have another flight.
If Candlemas Day be cloud and rain
Then winter will not come again.'

You would have to think what the weather was like on February 2nd to check the truth of this saying. I'm guessing it was wet so maybe we have now seen the end of winter!

TRAKWORD

The words RAIN and WIND have been wrapped round the grid below. The centre space has been left empty for you to fill with one letter of your own choice. (It's a good idea to choose a vowel.) See how many more words you can make by tracking from letter to letter in any direction. (Which is the most useful letter to put in the middle?)

A	I	N
R		W
D	N	I





FRIENDS OF NORTHCLIFFE



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Answers to Crossword no 12

Across

1 Great tit; 6 Leaf; 8 Miaows; 9 Acorns; 10 First month; 12 Dabble;
14 Fatten; 15 Awakenings; 19 Unbolt; 20 Italics; 21 Isle; 22 Parakeets

Down

2 Rain; 3 A woof; 4 To serve; 5 Toast; 6 Look out, or Lookout;
7 A knitter; 11 Waxwings; 13 Bake one; 14 Fancier; 16 No tip;
17 Sparks; 18 Kite

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